

Climate Ambassadors' Workshop Summary and Survey Results

Background

Early in May 2018, the Deep South National Science Challenge, with support from the now disbanded NZ Climate Change Centre (NZCCC), hosted a workshop in Wellington with the aim of supporting and developing a community of skilled and influential climate ambassadors who are confident in championing an informed and pro-active climate change agenda in policy, research, the private sector and within local communities.

The workshop was the first of four planned around the country. This first, Wellington-based, event focussed on how to better connect outputs from climate research with decision-making and implementation processes in local and regional government. Forty-five participants from around the country arrived at Te Papa for the one-day workshop featuring presentations from, and opportunities for discussion with, our expert panel of [Stephen Daysh](#), [Judy Lawrence](#), [Wendy Saunders](#), [Iain Dawe](#) and [Andrew Tait](#).

Participants were presented with an optional survey to complete at the end of the day. This provided them with an opportunity to share their experiences of the day, offer feedback and suggest the direction of future workshops. A summary of the results are presented here.

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the NZ Climate Change Centre (NZCCC) for providing funding to support these workshops. Thank you to Teanau Tuiono for facilitating the event.

The survey questions and overall design were created by Dr Joanna Goven for the Deep South Challenge Engagement Programme. Survey analysis and report presentation was carried out by Matt Scott.

This research is being led by Dr Rhian Salmon and was approved by the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee 0000025702.

Summary of breakout discussions

The morning session was divided into five, self-selected, break-out groups, organised according to shared barriers to adaptation or common issues faced by sectors and communities. These focused on changing mindsets, lack of coordinated processes and policies, lack of access to appropriate science knowledge, local and central government, and iwi and community engagement.

The afternoon breakout groups were themed around issues presented by the experts: implementing adaptation, impacts and implications, engagement, navigating the policy landscape, and the [Clifton to Tangoio Coastal Hazards Strategy](#) 2120 case study presented by Stephen Daysh.

Key themes that emerged from the **iwi and community engagement group** included the need for compassionate conversations and dealing with the emotional and human response to climate change; and the need to better acknowledge diversity and consider inclusivity in these conversations. This was complemented by discussions by the group considering the **need to change mindsets**, who identified a need to break the fear of the political cycle and get community-level buy-in and leadership. They also identified a need for a national strategy or plan that people can relate to and connect into.

The group considering the apparent **lack of coordinated policies and processes** also identified a need for greater connectivity, exploring the use of legislation to give local governance the mandate to make policies on climate change, as well as needs for better data sharing, clear science communication and accessible information. This was complemented by the group considering issues related to **local and central government**, who identified key issues as being the lag time between making decisions and policy-action, and the false divide between various levels of government. A related issue, identified by the group considering the **lack of access to appropriate science knowledge**, were the very different timescales that science research and policy evolve at. These all lead to a need for adaptive policy-making and policy-structures.

Common themes that resonated throughout the day included a need for:

- Clear policy guidance such as a national adaptation strategy;
- Specific focussed actions and opportunities that can enable the move from concept to implementation;
- Better coordination, translation and integration across and between government, science and policy processes; and
- A need for communication and engagement (at both an organisational and community level) to be integrated throughout these activities.

Workshop feedback

Below are the feedback and the collated results that emerged from the survey completed at the end of the **Climate Adaptation Ambassadors: Steering Research through to Policy and Action** workshop. Key comments that reflect the group are expressed; while figures presented show frequency and response type.

Overall goals for the day

We asked participants to write down their overall goal they had for the workshop. Commonalities focused on the following three themes:

- Meeting other like-minded people, making **connections**, networking
- Gain an understanding of **effective strategies** in assessing risk and the incorporation of that back into their work, providing information for their climate change (CC) action plans
- Learning new ways to **communicate** about CC adaptation and mitigation

Here are some responses that reflected the common feeling across participants:

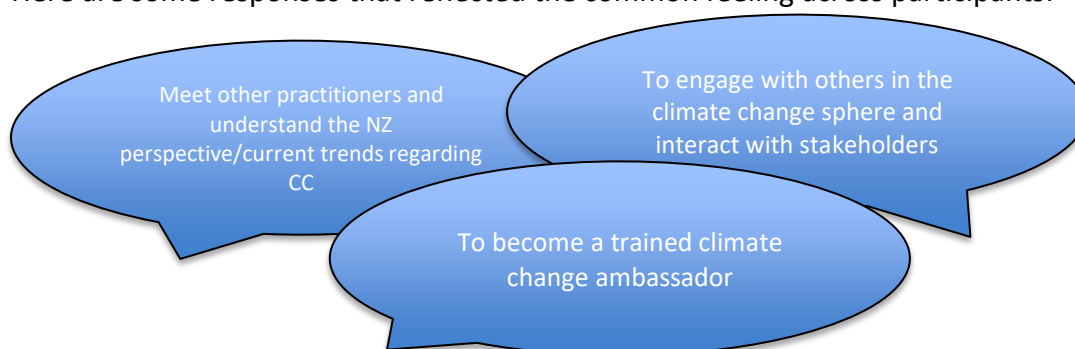


Figure 1 Examples of goals from DSC survey 2018

Improving understandings of the impacts and implications of climate change

We asked participants whether, because of the workshop, they had a better or worse understanding of the impacts and implications of CC.

53% (or 16 responses) people said that they had 'neither a better nor worse' understanding of the impacts and implications of CC after the workshop, while 43% (13 responses) indicated that their understanding was 'better'. Only 1 respondent said their understanding was 'much better'.

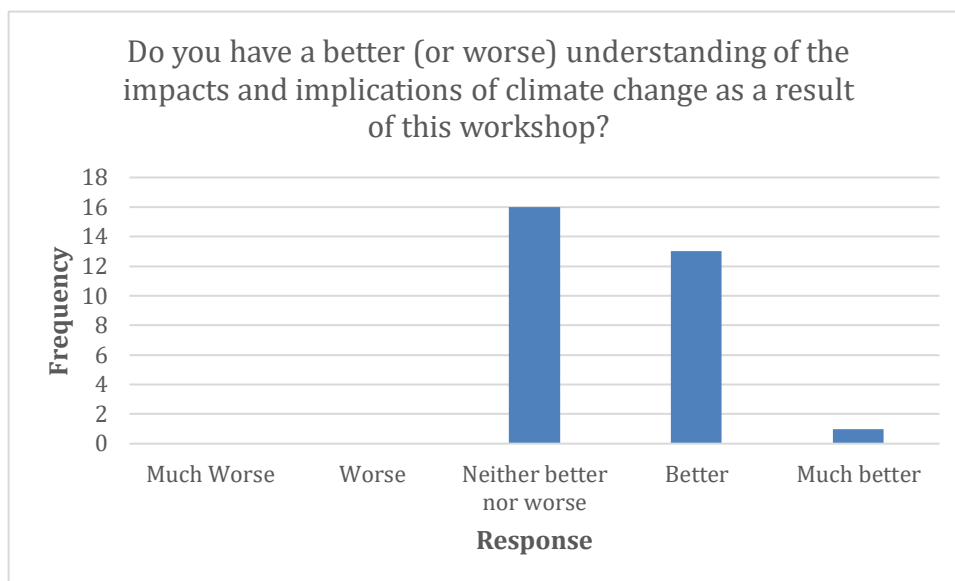


Figure 2 Column graph of Participant's post-workshop understanding of CC impacts and implications

A few comments from participants who answered 'neither better nor worse' indicated that some participants already had a good understanding of impacts and implications before they entered the workshop and nothing was new to them.

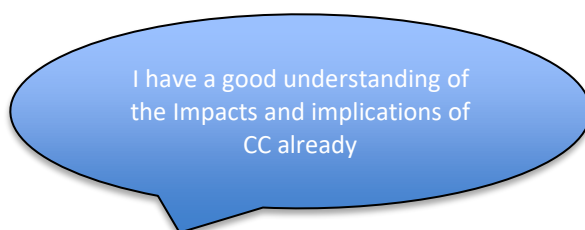


Figure 3 A participant's response to their understanding of CC impacts and implications

Others noted a lack of discussion of the topic over the course of whole day:

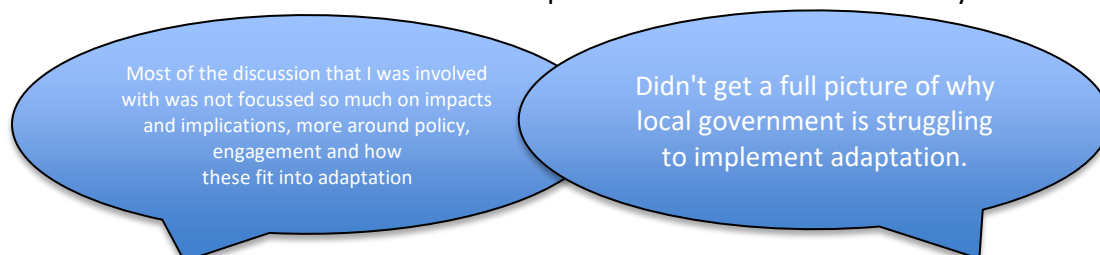


Figure 4 Participants' response to their understanding of CC impacts and implications

Improving the understanding of the impacts and implications of climate change for your region and sector/community

We asked participants whether, because of the workshop, they had a better or worse understanding of the impacts and implications of CC in their region.

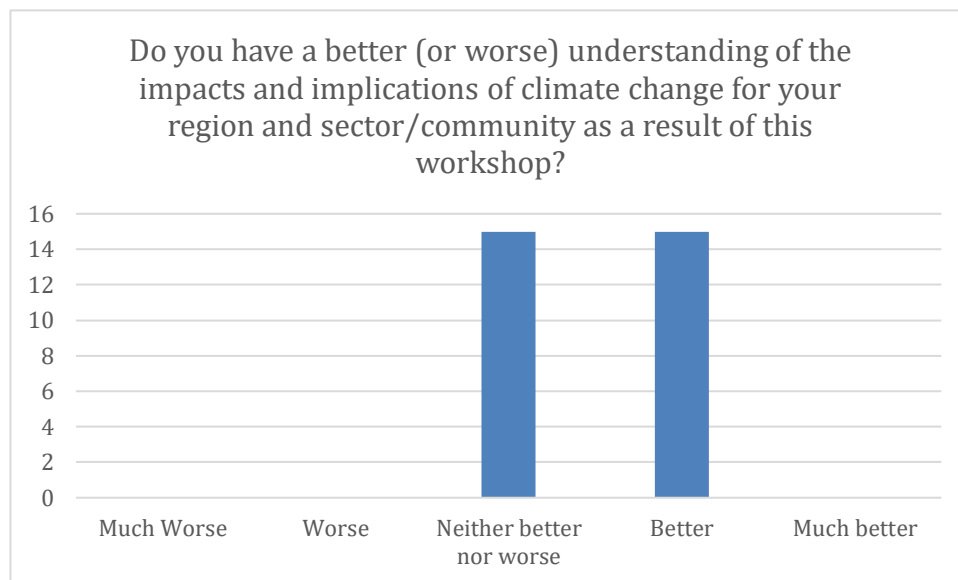


Figure 5 Column graph of participants' post-workshop understanding of CC impacts and implications for their region

Responses to this question were split 50/50. Half (15 respondents) of the participants said their understanding of regional impacts and implications did not improve or worsen, while the other 50% said that it improved, but only somewhat.

Some responses that reflect the general feeling about the understanding of regional CC impacts and implications are quoted here:

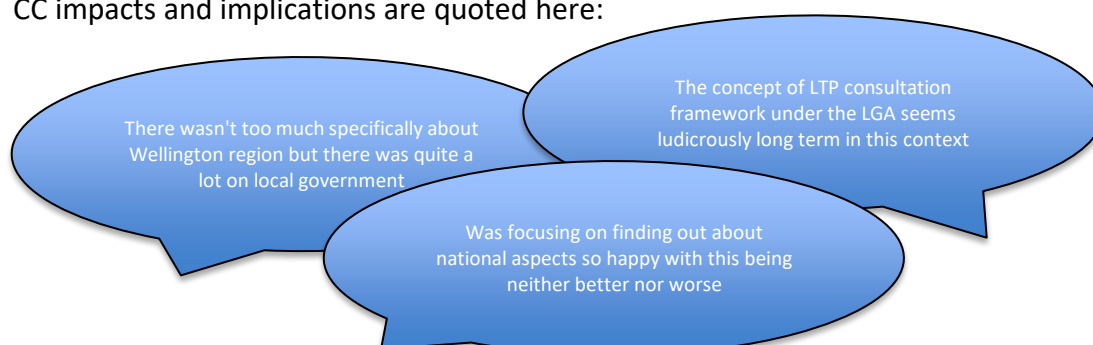


Figure 6 Responses to participants' understanding of regional CC impacts and implications

Improving awareness of adaptation approaches and options

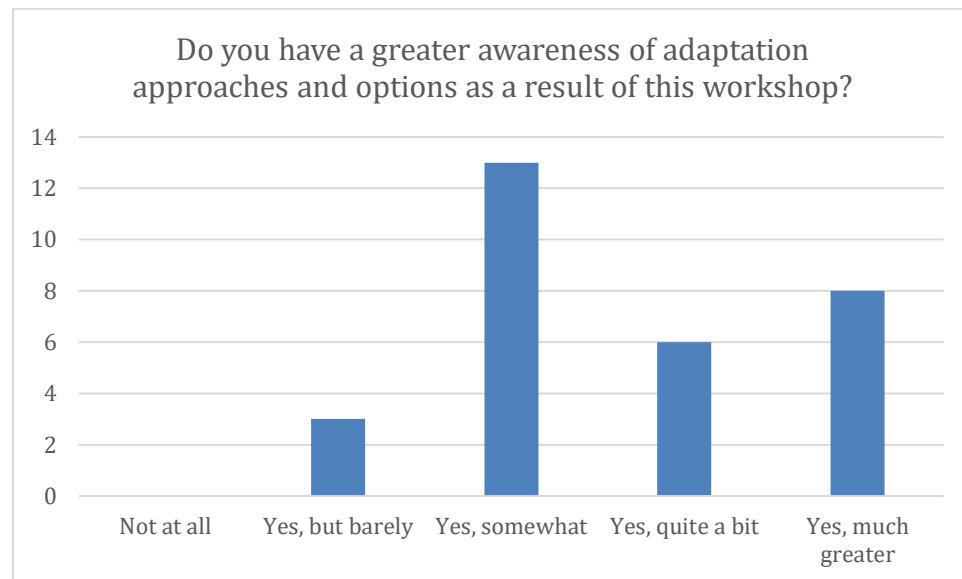


Figure 7 Column graph showing participants' awareness of adaptation approaches and options post-workshop

The above graph shows that a majority (90%) said that their awareness of adaptation approaches and options was 'somewhat', 'quite a bit' or 'much' greater than before the workshop. 10% said that it had improved 'barely'. 100% of respondents said that their awareness had increased in some capacity.

In addition, we received the following feedback through comments:

- Hawkes Bay **case study** presented by Stephen was well liked
- Relationships and **connections** made at the workshop will continue to help with maintaining this awareness

Improving understanding of adaptation complexities

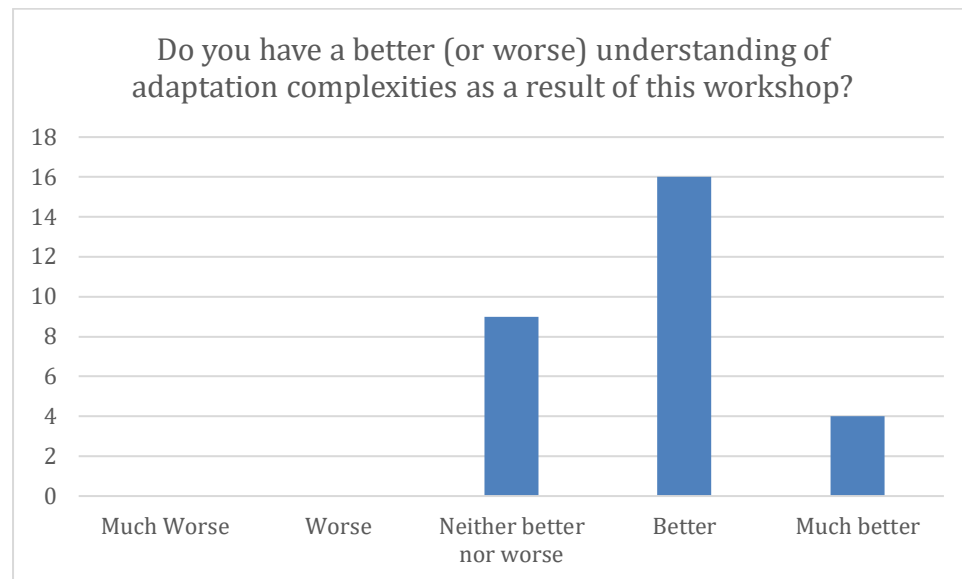


Figure 8 Column graph showing participants' understanding of adaptation complexities post-workshop

When we asked the workshop participants, “Do you have a better (or worse) understanding of adaptation complexities as a result of this workshop?” we received the responses shown in the above graph.

Here are a few responses from participants on this question:

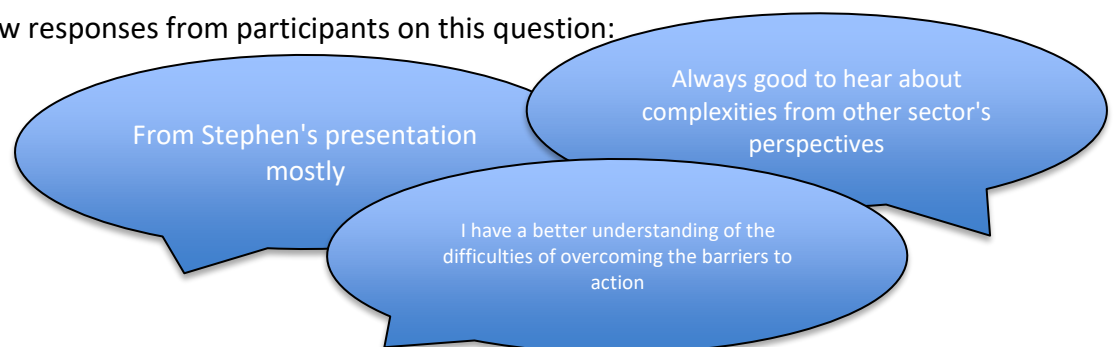


Figure 9 Responses to participants' understanding of adaptation complexities post-workshop

Improving the ability to facilitate action on climate-change adaptation in your sector/community or region

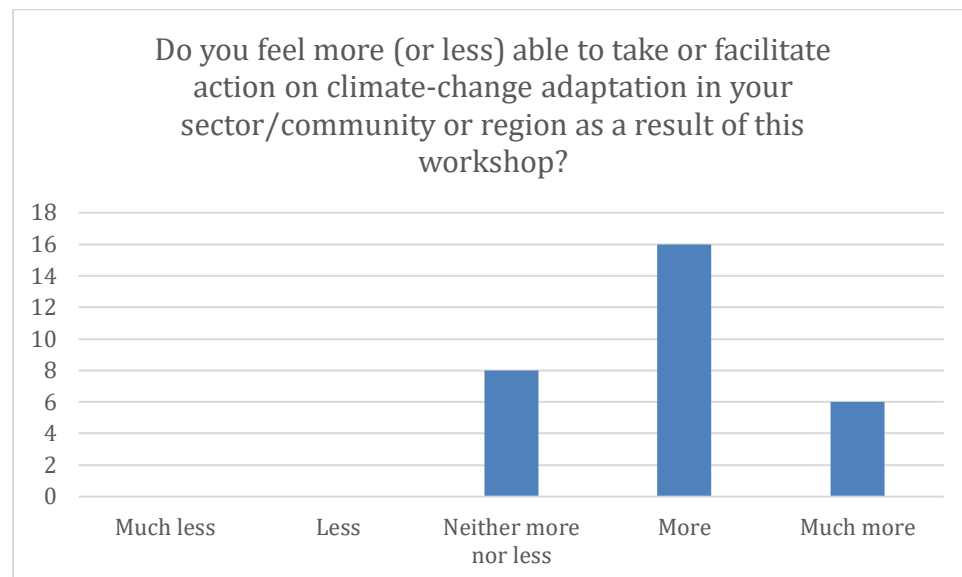


Figure 9 Column graph showing participants' ability to facilitate action on CC adaptation post-workshop

The above graph shows that the majority of people (53.33%) said they are 'more able' to facilitate action on CC adaptation. 20% said that they were 'much more able', while 26.67%, or 8 respondents said that it had not changed.

Participants who indicated that their ability had not increased included the following comments on their surveys:

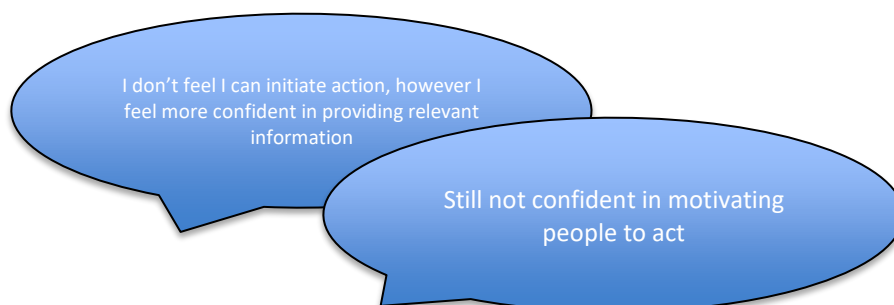


Figure 10 Critical comments from participants on their ability to facilitate action post-workshop

While others noted that:

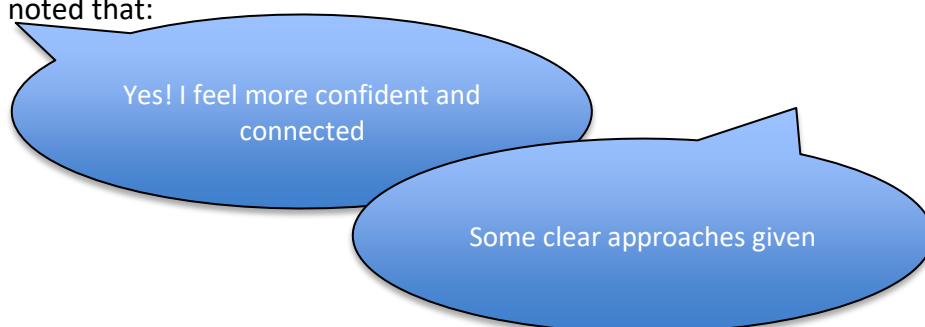


Figure 11 Positive comments from participants on their ability to facilitate action post-workshop

Improving connections to relevant experts in the field of climate change impacts and implications

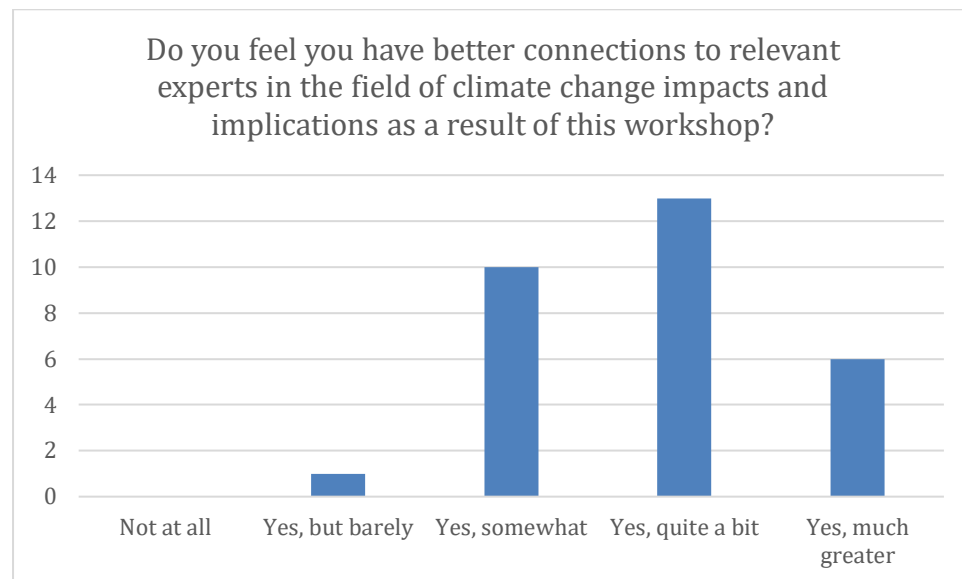


Figure 12 Column graph showing participants' feeling of new connections to I&I experts post-workshop

When we asked the workshop participants, “Do you feel you have better connections to relevant experts in the field of climate change impacts and implications (I&I) as a result of this workshop?” we received the following responses

96% of respondents indicated that they now have ‘somewhat’, ‘quite a bit’ or ‘much better’ connections to CC (I&I) experts as a result of the workshop.

This question received the most positive feedback. Here are some examples:

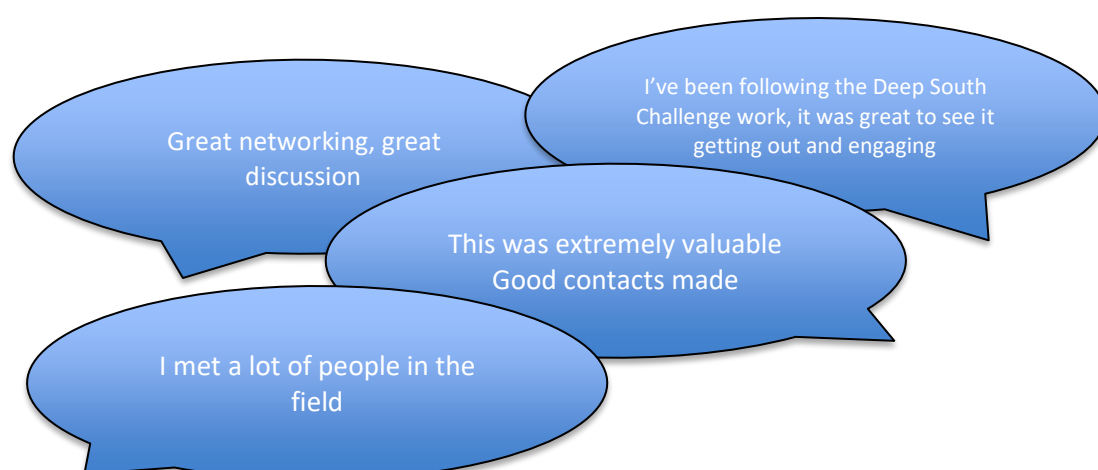


Figure 13 Participants' responses to the feeling of connectedness to I&I experts post-workshop

Improving connections to relevant experts in the field of climate change adaptation

We asked the previous question again but with connectedness to experts in CC **adaptation** rather than I&I experts.

Here are the responses:

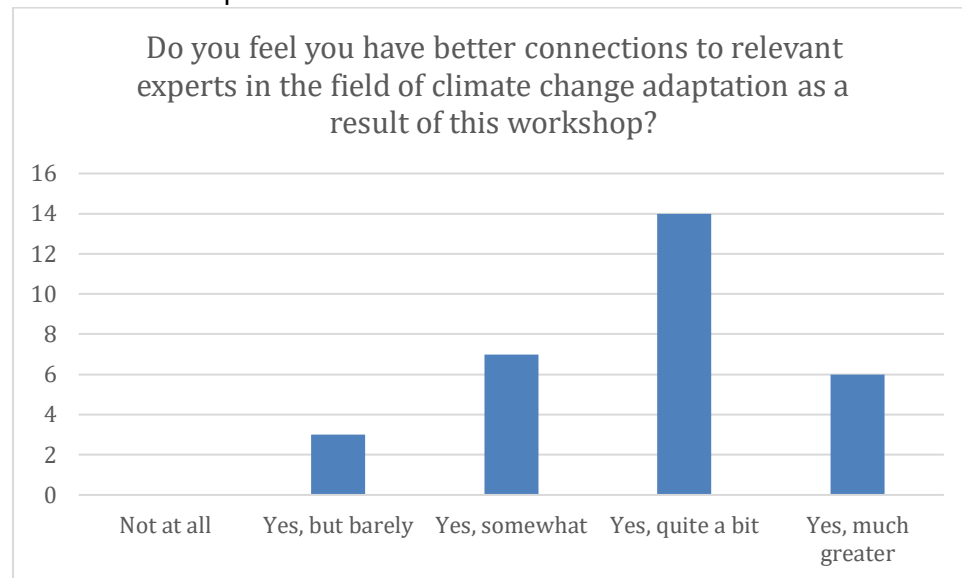


Figure 14 Column graph showing participants' feeling of new connections to adaptation experts post-workshop

Improving confidence to work with policy relevant to climate change impacts and adaptation

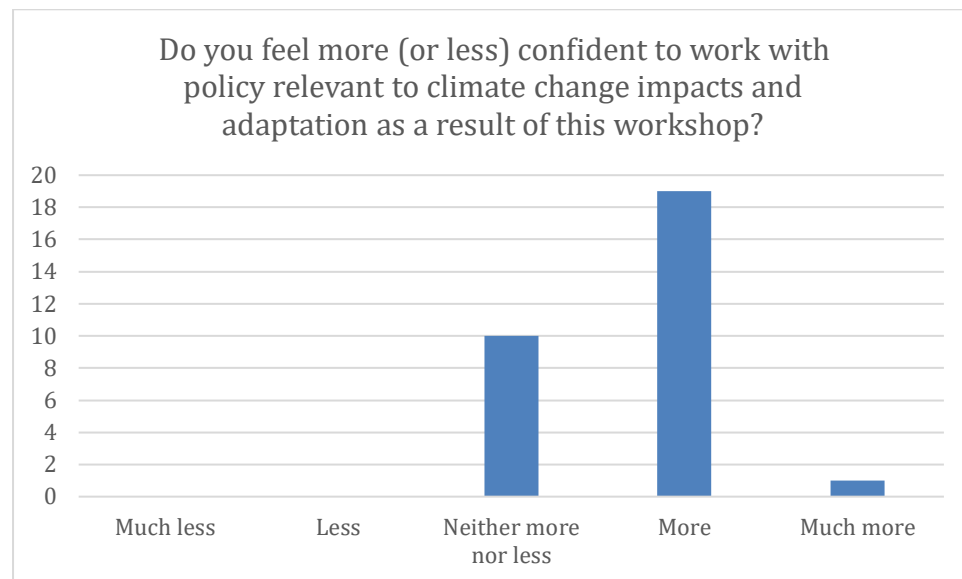


Figure 15 Column graph showing participants' confidence to work with CC policy post-workshop

The results were positive for this question, with 63% identifying that they feel more confident dealing with CC policy after the workshop. However, with 33% of respondents saying they had no change in confidence, we look at the comments to identify possible improvements:

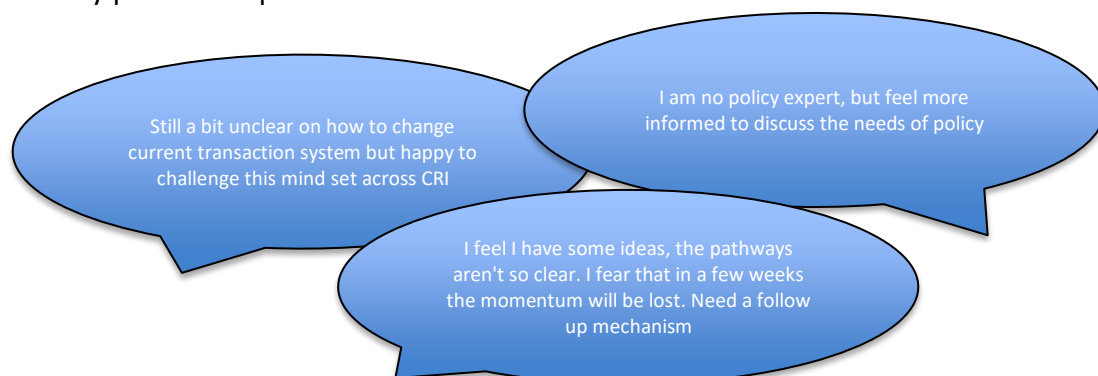


Figure 16 Participants' responses to their confidence in dealing with CC policy post-workshop

Improving participants' confidence to facilitate conversations about CC adaptation



Figure 17 Column graph showing participants' ability to facilitate conversations about CC adaptation post-workshop

When asked whether participants feel more confident to facilitate conversations about CC adaptation we see similar results to the previous question on CC policy.

100% of responses indicated a neutral or positive change in confidence, with 80% saying their confidence had increased.

Participants noted:



Figure 18 Participants' responses to their confidence to facilitate conversations about CC adaptation post-workshop

Creating a community of connected climate ambassadors

One of the goals of this workshop is to start building a community of people skilled in taking climate research data through into action. We asked participants the following sets of questions (displayed in the graph titles).

As a result of participating in this workshop, do you feel that:

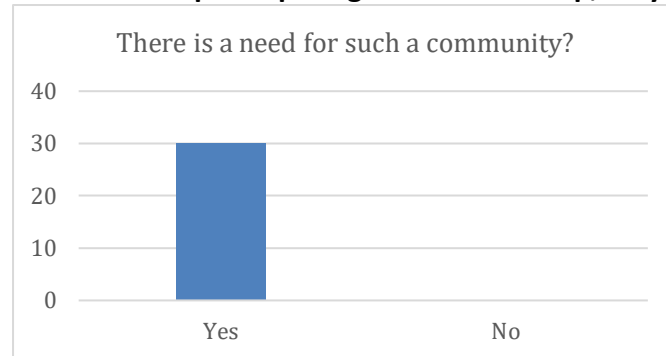


Figure 19 Column graph of participants' responses to the need for a community of connected people

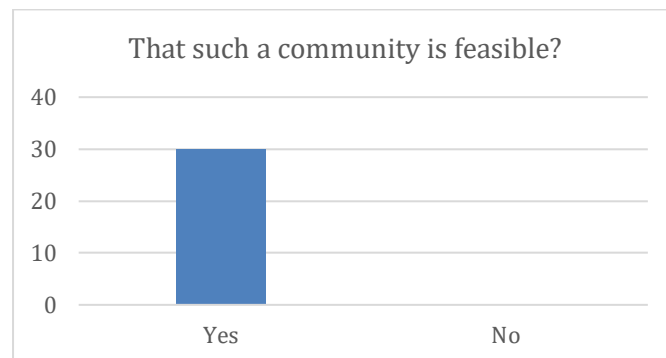


Figure 20 Column graph of participants' responses to the feasibility of a community of connected people

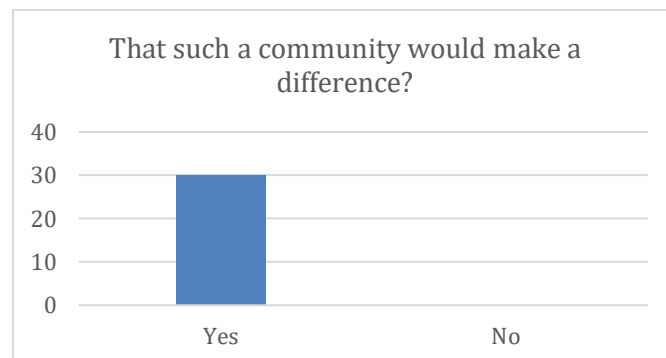


Figure 21 Column graph of participants' responses that agree that a community of connected people will make a difference

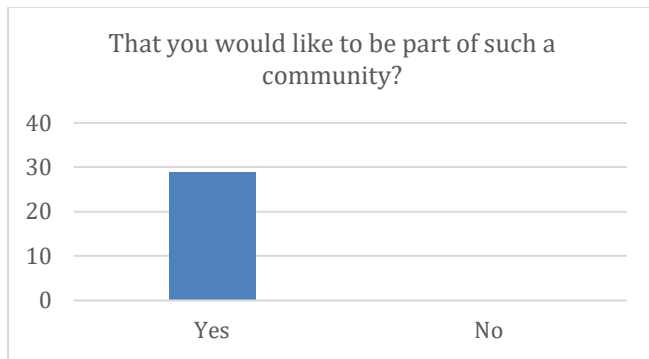


Figure 22 Column graph of participants' responses indicating that they would want to be a part of a community of connected people

For this question we received a 100% 'Yes' response to all four aspects of the connected community question.

Here are some of the responses to this set of questions:

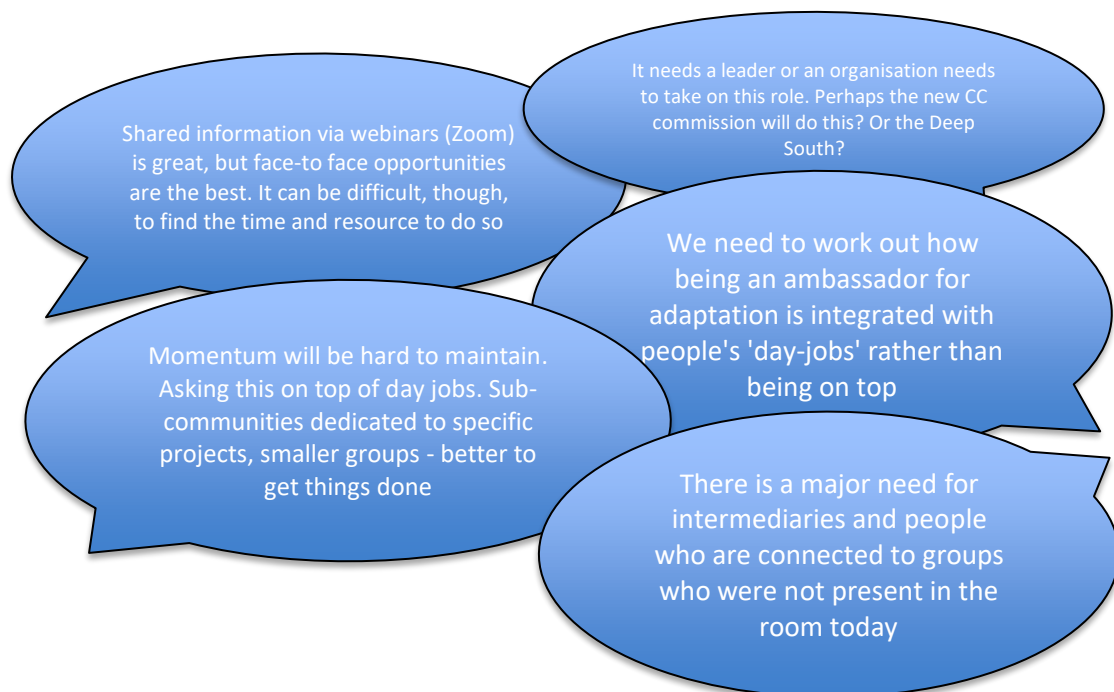


Figure 23 Participants' responses to the need for a network of connected people post-workshop

Usefulness of the different elements and design of the workshop:

For these following questions, participants had the following options to choose from (increasing in usefulness): 'not at all', 'barely', 'somewhat', 'quite', and 'very'.

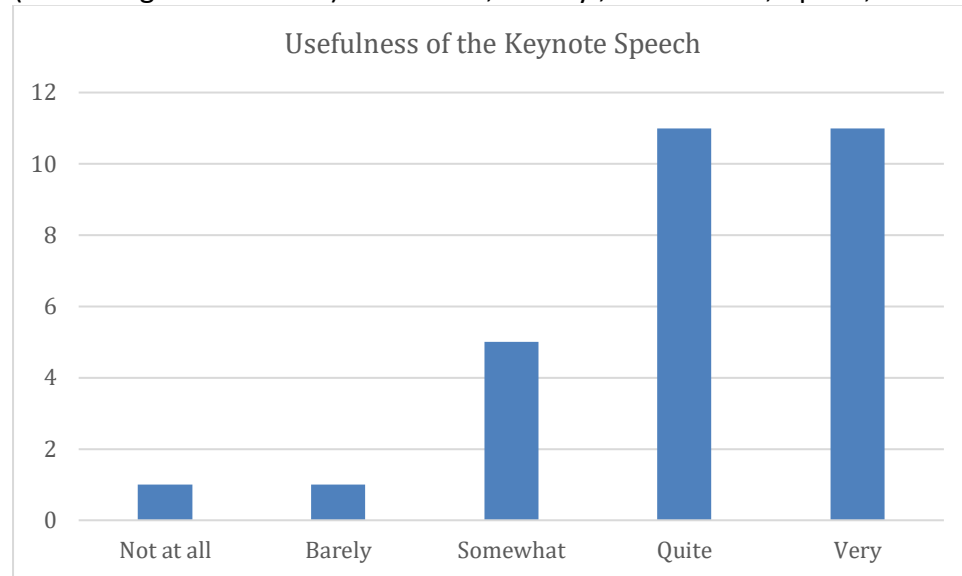


Figure 24 Column graph showing the usefulness of the Keynote speech

Feedback throughout the survey towards the keynote speech was overwhelmingly positive, also depicted on this graph. 6.9% said that the usefulness of the keynote was 'not at all' or 'barely' useful. While the remaining 93.1% said it was useful in some respect. 38% said it was 'very' useful.

The 'negative' responses towards the keynote were purely because they had heard Stephen present the same or similar speeches before.

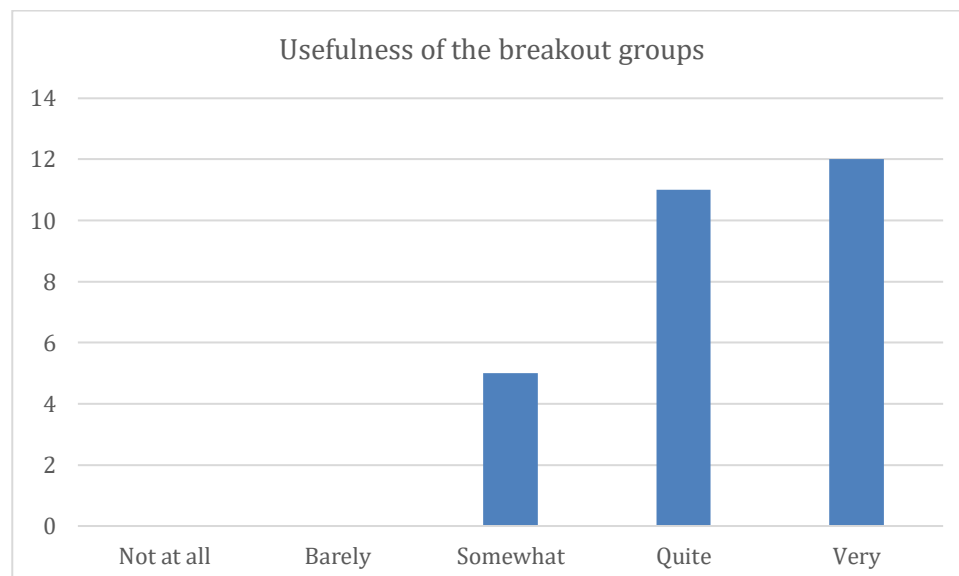


Figure 25 Column graph showing the usefulness of the breakout groups

The break out groups were well received, with no one indicating that the break out groups were 'not', or 'barely' useful. 43% said that they felt the breakout groups were 'very' useful.

Here is some of the written feedback on the breakout groups:

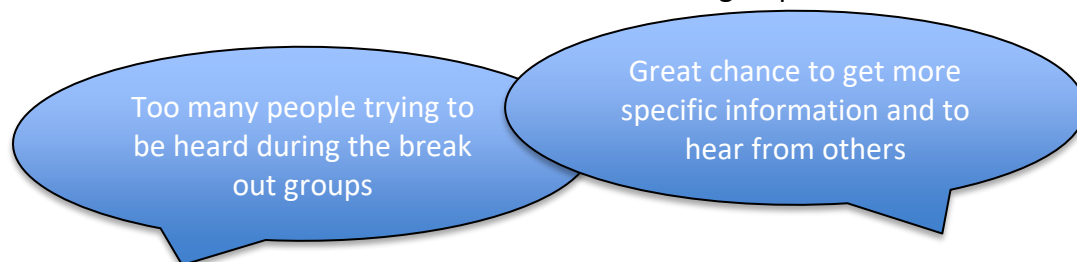


Figure 26 Participants' responses to the usefulness of the breakout groups

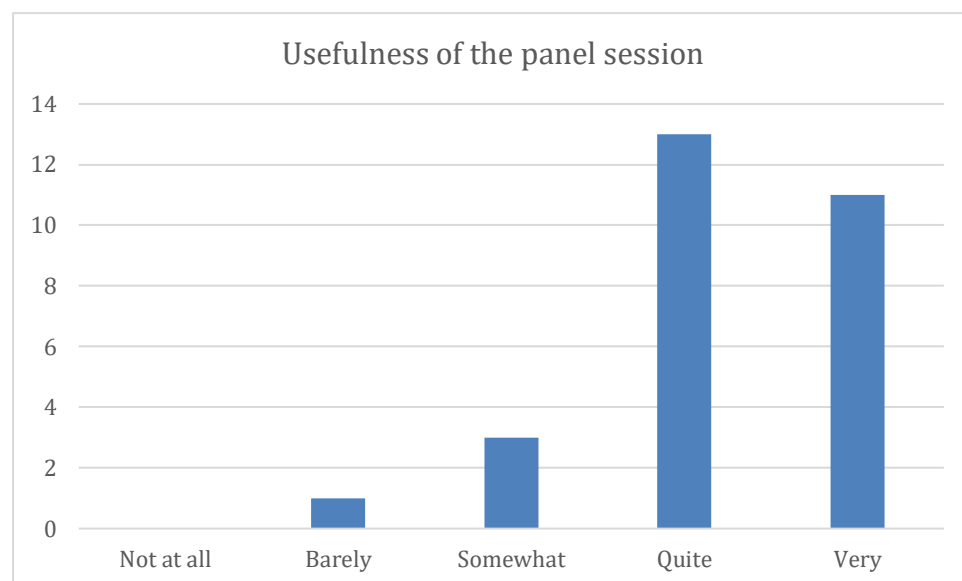


Figure 27 Column graph showing the usefulness of the panel session



Figure 28 Participants response to the usefulness of the panel session

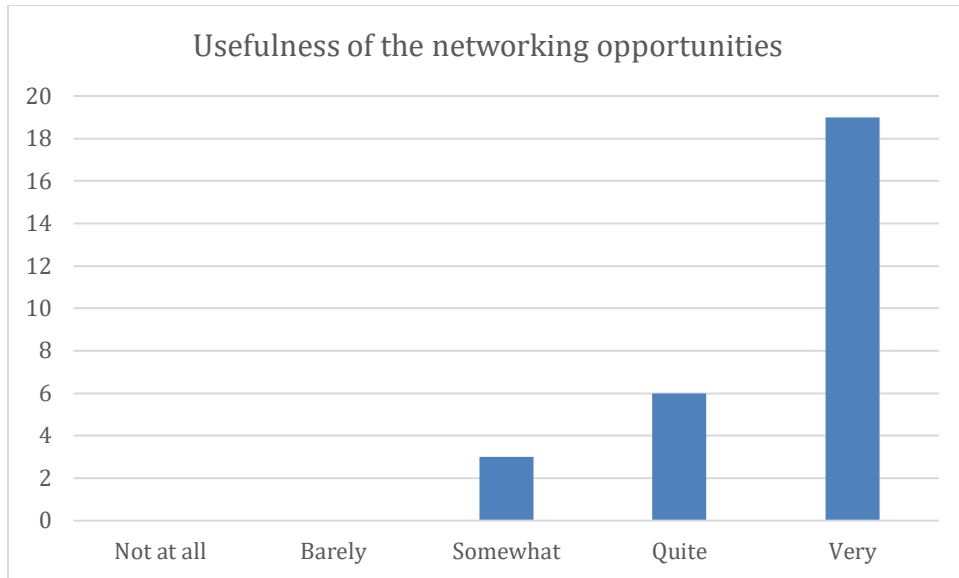


Figure 29 Column graph showing the usefulness of the networking opportunities

The networking opportunity were one of the most important goals for the participants of this workshop and were well received overall with the majority of people (68%) saying that networking opportunities were 'very' useful. Not one person said that the networking opportunities were either 'not at all' or 'barely' useful.

Which other communities/ sectors do you think we should focus on for future "climate ambassador" workshops?

Here is a word cloud for the responses to the above question:
(Bigger words indicating more frequent responses)

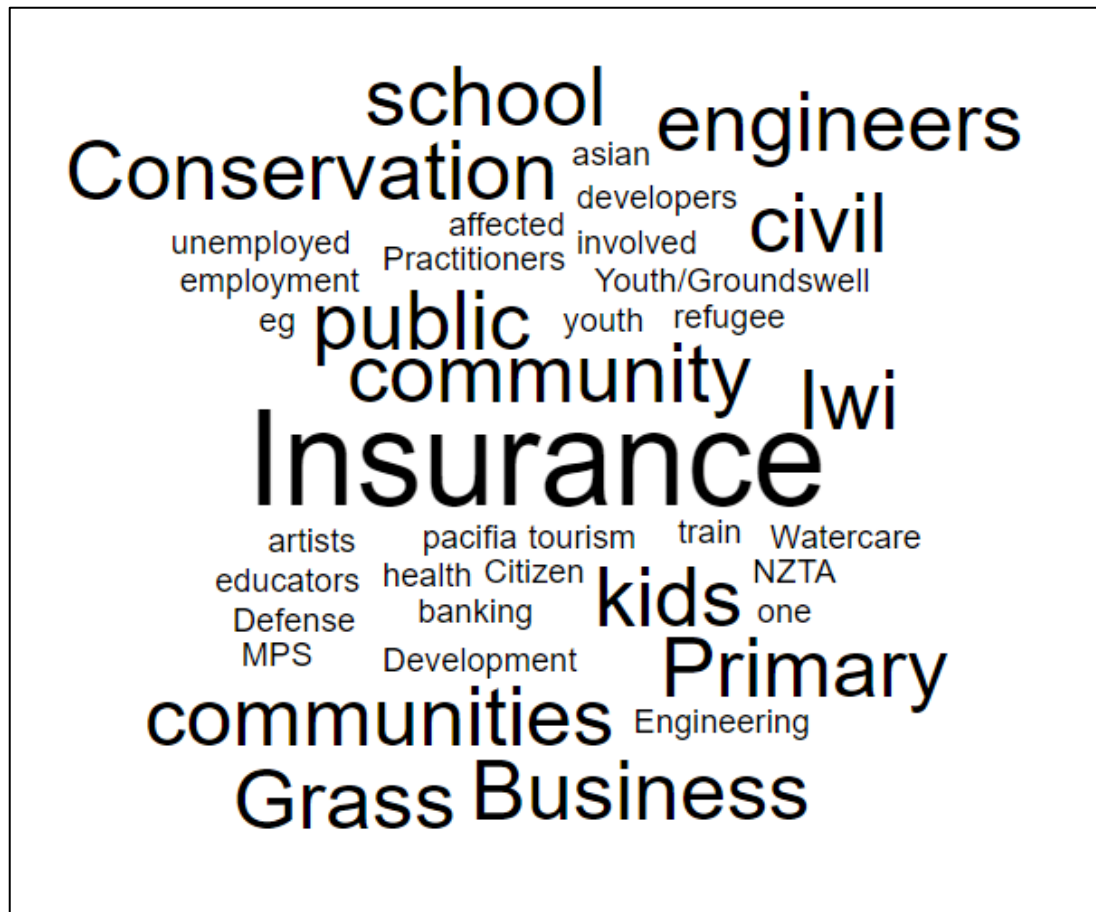


Figure 30 Word cloud of common communities/sectors we should focus on